

Remarks

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in view of the above amendments and in light of the following remarks and discussion, is respectfully requested.

Applicants respectfully request entry of this response, as the response places the application in clear condition for allowance, or alternatively places the claims in better form for appeal. Specifically, Applicants have amended the claims to overcome a rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph.

Claims 1, 2, 6, 7, 11, 15, 19, 22, and 24 are pending in the application; independent Claims 1 and 19 having been amended by way of the present response. Applicants respectfully assert that support for the changes to the claims is self-evident from the originally filed disclosure, including the original claims, and that therefore no new matter has been added.

In the Office Action Claims 1, 2, 6, 11, 19, 22, and 24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph. In response, although Applicants respectfully assert that the definition of pivot is understood to include rotate,¹ Applicants have amended independent Claims 1 and 19 to recite that the shaft “pivots,” which the Office Action asserts is supported by the specification.²

Further, Applicants have amended independent Claims 1 and 19 to recite that the wheel is configured to rotate about an axis that is “non-parallel” to an axis about which the shaft pivots. Applicants respectfully assert that regardless of whether original Figures 1 and 2 show the wheel or gathering castor 1 configured to rotate about an axis perpendicular to an axis about which the shaft 4 pivots, one of ordinary skill in the art would understand that the wheel or gathering castor 1 is configured to rotate about an axis that is non-parallel to an axis

¹ The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition, 2000.

² Page 3, lines 17 and 18, of the Office Action states, in relevant part, that “the disclosure . . . indicates that the shaft pivots.”

about which the shaft 4 pivots, as recited in the claims. By way of further explanation, Applicants respectfully assert that, consistent with the Examiner's understanding, while the shaft 4 can pivot about an axis that extends out of the page when viewing Figures 1 and 2, the wheel or gathering castor 1 can rotate about an axis that is not parallel to the axis about which the shaft 4 rotates, because the wheel or gathering castor 1 is understood by one of ordinary skill in the art to rotate about an axis perpendicular to a direction in which the filaments of the strand 3 travel.

Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner contact Applicants' undersigned representative in the event that the Examiner requires changes to the drawings or disclosure to further show or explain the above discussed features, which Applicants respectfully assert are at least supported by the original drawings.

Applicants respectfully assert that the above amendments to the claims are believed to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claims 1, 2, 6, 11, 19, 22, and 24 be withdrawn, that withdrawn Claims 7 and 15 be considered on the merits, and that Claims 1, 2, 6, 7, 11, 15, 19, 22, and 24 be allowed.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application, and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal Allowance. A Notice of Allowance for Claims 1, 2, 6, 7, 11, 15, 19, 22, and 24 is earnestly solicited.

Application No. 09/926,415
Reply to Office Action of December 17, 2004

Should the Examiner deem that any further action is necessary to place this application in even better form for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned representative at the below listed telephone number.

Customer Number

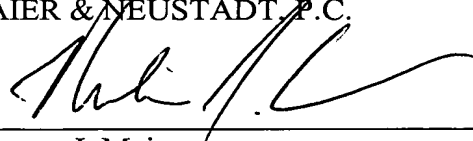
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